

Stars in his Eyes by CeruleanHeart

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Summary:

It's not something anyone thought would ever happen, Billy Hargrove and Steve Harrington becoming the Hawkins Tigers' basketball dream team. But then it does happen and everything, absolutely everything, changes.

Steve finds himself falling hard and fast for Billy. All it takes is winning a game, a brilliant smile and a pair of very pretty blue eyes. Maybe they can be more than rivals after all.

Stars in his Eyes

It's not something anyone thought would ever happen, Billy Hargrove and Steve Harrington becoming the Hawkins Tigers' basketball dream team. Not in a million years.

But the thing is, Billy Hargrove loves winning. He loves it more than bragging or showing off and even more than teasing Steve. He loves winning so much, he's willing to make sacrifices. Like passing Steve the ball 3 seconds before the game ends because he knows he won't make the shot from his position.

"Don't let me down, Harrington!" he yells when Steve's fingers touch the rubber, they're two points behind.

Hargrove's voice is still ringing in his ears when Steve shoots. Without hesitating he shoots, aims for a 3-pointer and watches the world shift into slow-motion. The ball cuts through the air like it's made of syrup, hits the rim heavy and slow, dances on it for what feels like a small eternity and then finally goes through the net.

The shrill sound of the final whistle breaks the spell and Steve gets just enough time to draw in a single breath before it's knocked out of him again, when another body collides with his.

It's Billy. Billy roaring with victory, Billy getting his arms around Steve before the impact can make him topple over, Billy hauling him close and then up, up, up. Billy, lifting him, hands on the back of his thighs pressing in below the swell of his ass, Billy carrying him like that around the court chanting "Harrington! Harrington!".

Steve only vaguely notices the rest of the team flocking around them, going absolutely nuts and joining Billy chanting his name. His eyes are trained on Billy's face, entranced with what he sees there. A radiant smile, open and genuine and so completely disarming, Steve doesn't even think of freeing himself from his hold. And those incredibly blue eyes, bright and clear and full of stars, sparkling with pure joy. They alone are a wonder to behold. Looking at them makes Steve think he's losing gravity.

It's the first time he sees Billy like that, so happy and so proud. So proud of Steve for getting the shot! It's highly contagious and it makes euphoria bubble in his chest and explode in a loud cry of victory as he flings his arms around Billy's neck, squeezes him tight and ruffles his curls.

"We did it! WE DID IT!!"

He wraps his legs around the other boy's waist and gets a sharp slap on his ass in return before Billy breaks into a light jog across the court. Their teammates follow hollering and whooping pumping their fists in the air.

Carried like this Steve is going backwards, facing the other team, he raises both arms and does the victory sign.

"EAT THAT JACKSON!!"

The team, the crowd, Billy, they all cheer at a deafening volume. Steve feels like a god.

When Billy finally sets him down, Steve is laughing so hard he's dizzy from it, his legs all wobbly and his head spinning like he's drunk on triumph. Billy is wheezing, face red and sweat running down his temples from the exertion of carrying Steve around. But the stars in his eyes are still there making the inside of Steve's head feel all glittery and stupid.

"King Steve." Billy grins without a trace of sarcasm in his voice and Steve goes so dumb from all the praise hidden in those two words he wants to kiss him. On the mouth. That red, wet mouth of his archenemy.

Luckily Coach is there to save Steve from himself when he separates the two boys still holding each other to congratulate them.

"Good job turning the game around, boys! I'm proud."

"Thanks, coach." they beam first at him and then each other.

"Always knew you had it in you." they get a hard slap on the shoulder each and are sent to the showers with the rest of the team.

Steve waits for the adrenaline to ebb away and take that weird kind of fuzzy feeling in his gut with it as he jogs after Billy to join the others. But it doesn't happen. Everyone is way too amped up about winning the game. There is too much friendly roughhousing and towel slapping, too much post-game banter and teenage ego boosting going on.

It's been a while since Steve got this much positive attention at school, since he's been that far up the food chain and if he's honest with himself, he missed it. He missed this team spirit, missed the comradery, he even missed Tommy who's slinking back into his space and treats him like they've never stopped being best friends. For the first time in months Steve feels completely free and unburdened.

Coach keeps the debriefing short this time, knowing his team's attention span after a win all too well, but he doesn't forget to point out Billy's and Steve's achievements.

"Boys, that was some great teamwork we saw tonight, I want you all to follow Harrington's and Hargrove's example. But that also means you two in particular ..." he points at first at Billy and then at Steve "... need to keep on working together and improve your performance. Do not to slack off after one good game! We're on the right track to playing a great season!"

The team applauds and cheers again and Steve's eyes wander to the other side of the room where Billy's still dressed in nothing but his towel. He catches him looking, sticks his tongue out and winks at him. Steve rolls his eyes, throws his dirty towel in Hargrove's general direction with a light laugh and then starts packing up his stuff.

"What do you say to that?!" Tommy hollers from where he watched the scene, always thirsty for gossip "Hargrove and Harrington, the dynamic duo!"

"Shut up! You heard the coach." Billy grins and smacks the other boy across the face with his towel, wiping his stupid smile right off it "Take an example, Hill!"

Steve feels his cheeks warm but he doesn't say anything. Doesn't know what to say to this new development that almost feels like it's

too good to be true. But all the while he's getting ready Steve's eyes never stop searching and finding Billy's over and over again. It's some kind of strange magnetic pull like they both can't get enough of looking and smiling at each other.

By the time he leaves and steps out into the parking lot Steve is still buzzing with that energy. He's itching to release it somewhere but whenever it's a weekday game like today, there isn't a lot going on afterwards, no parties or hangout sessions.

Some of the other players have proud parents or girlfriends with beaming faces waiting for them. Carol for example jumps Tommy the moment they get out and the two of them proceed with trying to eat each other's faces for a while, prompting the team members walking past them to make gross gagging noises or shout "Get a room!".

The only thing waiting for Steve in the parking lot is the BMW, gleaming lonely and cold under the light of a street lamp. Just seeing it stand there makes the post-game rush in his body die instantly. For a good minute or two he busies himself with looking for his keys in his duffle bag, feebly trying to ward off the feeling of emptiness creeping into his heart.

However, Steve doesn't have long to wallow in self-pity because Billy catches up with him then and gives him a shoulder bump that's hard enough to make him stumble a step forward.

"Hey!!" Steve is ready to complain but the look on Billy's face makes him shut up. He's still smiling, still starry eyed, no trace of his usual hostility.

"A few of us are heading to the diner. Gonna grab some burgers, shoot the shit. You're coming, Harrington?" Billy asks all casual, all no-big-deal-we're-buddies like.

They're not buddies and it's a hell of a big deal. And Steve knows if the last shot hadn't made him the star of the game, his dignity wouldn't allow him to take the invitation. Not with all that history they have. But like that neither of them is losing face. Like that it's just the two playmakers Billy, who scored most points and Steve, who made the winning shot, hanging out after the match. Something

normal, something easy. He wants this more than anything.

“Yeah.” Steve hears himself say and he’s glad he only sounds a tad too happy, too eager and not like the smiling loon he’s on the inside. “Sure. Why not?”

“Cool.” Billy says his cheeks a little too pink as well. “See you there.”

He saunters off twirling the ring of his car key around his finger, a bounce in his step and Steve too hurries to get to his own car. While he follows the tail lights of Billy’s Camaro to the diner he feels the buzz creeping back under his skin, but it’s got a different quality this time. It’s the kind of nervous tingling you get all over your body when you’re heading out to go on a first date with someone.

Which is crazy, Steve tells himself. Absolutely crazy, just like earlier when he thought about kissing Billy for a moment. It must be some kind of whacky post-game tension because why would he even think shit like that. Maybe because of Billy’s brilliant smile, his ridiculously pretty eyes and the way they look at him. That should be illegal, someone needs to stop Hargrove. Not Steve, though.

When he gets to the diner he parks right next to the Camaro but after stepping inside he only sees Danny, Kyle and Jason from his team sitting in a corner booth and signaling him to come over. Billy is nowhere in sight, even though he couldn’t have arrived more than a few minutes earlier than Steve. He goes over to them anyway. They were his friends first he’s just picking up where they left before... well before Nancy, if he’s honest about it. He may have a habit of focusing a bit too much on a single person.

Danny claps him on the back when he sits down with them.

“Steve! Good to have you back from the dead, man!” he beams and Kyle leans over the table to give him a light slap on the head with the menu going “We missed you, buddy!”

“Careful with the hair!” Steve laughs and kicks Kyle’s shin under the table while smoothing back his luscious dark locks. God, he missed

them too.

“I leave you guys alone for a minute and you start messing with pretty boy?”

Steve’s heart gives a light start at the sound of Billy’s deep voice and he turns to see him standing next to their table, wiping wet hands on his jeans, the moisture leaving darker smudges on the fabric. He must’ve been to the bathroom when he didn’t see him a minute ago.

The cushion of the bench dips under his weight when Billy squeezes into the booth to sit right next to Steve. He shuffles a bit to make more space for Billy, who promptly follows him so they end up sitting with their thighs pressed together. The booth should be big enough, even for five tall boys, but the others show now intention to move and Steve figures he’s got nowhere better to go so he stays where he is, all snuggly tight against the other boy on their part of the bench.

Billy looks pleased as pie.

“What’d I miss, ladies? You ordered already?” Hargrove steals the menu from Kyle, scratches his belly through his T-shirt while he scans it “God, I could eat a horse.”

They order burgers and fries and milkshakes and even a stack of waffles because Billy didn’t joke when he said he was hungry.

The time waiting for their food to arrive is spend with recapping the game again, but Steve mostly contributes white noise to the conversation. He’s way too distracted by the way Billy never stops moving next to him, the animated talker that he is. It doesn’t help that he occasionally wraps an arm around Steve’s shoulder to make a point while talking big about how they’re going to kick everyone’s ass for the rest of the season. Emphasis on they. Not Billy on his own. Billy and Steve.

It dawns on Steve then that he’s been claimed by Billy. Whether as a friend or vassal, he hasn’t quite figured that out yet but it sure as hell is a classic Hargrove move to just go ahead and decide that this duo act is their new thing now. Yeah, Billy is absolutely the type to bully

others into hanging out with him in one way or another. He's pretty sure this diner date was his idea as well and the others were just dragged along as extras.

Steve feels like he should definitely mind it more than he actually does. Knows he would have before. But Billy is surprisingly fun to be around when he dials back on the rivalry and general dickishness. Steve decides he likes his new side of Hargrove, he's having way too much of a good time right now to get all prissy about the details anyway.

And then there's the thing about those stars in Billy's eyes that are still glittering, maybe even brighter than before as he gets all hyped up about his big plans. Steve doesn't want them to go away or stop looking at them. While half-listening to Danny elaborating on why the team of Seymour High is "bodaciously overrated", he idly wonders if they've always been there and he simply never noticed them or if they just started shining today. But then the food arrives and they all turn into starving savages for a while.

It turns out Billy is one of those guys with weird fast-food habits. He picks his burger apart, separates the onions and eats the pickle slices first, mixes ketchup with mayo only to claim it's his own invention and the best thing since sliced bread and then moves on to dipping his fries into his milkshake.

"Ok, stop! That's gross!" Steve laughs and wrinkles his nose after watching him dunk his third fry "That poor piece of potato has done nothing wrong, it doesn't deserve that."

"That piece of potato just went to heaven, alright?" Billy huffs, indignant "How do you even know it's gross if you never tried it?!"

He points the fry covered in frothy milkshake at Steve accusingly.

"It's just not right, Hargrove!" Steve tries to move away but Billy follows, brings the fry closer to his face.

"I dare you to try it!" he says squinting at him with a mischievous little smirk.

“I don’t wanna try it.” Steve shakes his head still laughing.

“Don’t be a chicken, Harrington! It’s a dare!” Danny cries with his mouth full, food crumbs flying everywhere.

The other two boys chime in with “Eat the damn fry, Harrington.” and “Do it for the team!”

Billy moves even closer gently pokes Steve’s lower lip with the fry.

“Come on!” he coos “Open the hatch!”

“Eat, eat, eat!” the others chant in unison and Steve gives in with a sigh, opens his mouth and let’s Bill feed him the fry.

The truth is, he doesn’t even really taste it because he’s completely occupied with how Billy’s eyes are suddenly trained on his mouth and how his index finger brushes against Steve’s upper lip when he takes the bite. He almost forgets how to chew.

“How is it?” Billy asks and pops the other half of the fry in his own mouth. Steve tries very hard not to think of an indirect kiss.

“It’s kinda nice. Less disgusting than I thought.” he mumbles, not sure if he’s still talking about the food. His ears feel hot suddenly.

“See.” Billy licks his lips “I knew it.”

God, Steve thinks as the coin finally drops, we’re flirting.

He casts a nervous side glance at the others but they’re by far too busy with stuffing their faces to pick up on what’s going down and by the time he looks back at Billy, he’s moved on to destroying the rest of his fries.

Steve’s mind isn’t playing tricks on him, it can’t be. The only explanation for why it has taken him so long to catch on must be what Steve is ready to dub the “Hargrove Effect”. Billy’s constant show of supreme machismo, that lets him get away with pulling this kind of move in front of everyone without raising a single brow.

Steve is awestruck long enough for Billy to elbow him in the side and

ask him “You gonna eat that?” pointing at his half-eaten burger.

“Hell, yes!” Steve hastily grabs his burger to save it from Hargrove’s greedy paws, he’s not that far gone.

They finish their food, idly chatting away and Steve waits for some kind of awkwardness to settle in after his latest realization, but much to his surprise that doesn’t happen. Instead, a bunch of butterflies seems to have taken permanent residence in his stomach. They flap their wings vigorously every time Billy’s hand brushes Steve’s under the table. Something is growing in his heart that feels an awful lot like a brand new crush.

There’s any easy, casual mood settling in as Steve grows more and more comfortable next to Billy and their small group slowly comes down from the events of the evening. By the time Steve pushes some now-cold fries around their basket, too full to finish them, Danny and Kyle have their backs turned to them, unsuccessfully trying to pick up some girls in the booth next to theirs. Jason is dozing off in the corner, his mouth hanging open and his head lulled to one side.

Billy nudges Steve gently.

“Think you can make that shot as well?” he asks, gesturing from the fry in Steve’s hand to Jason’s mouth.

“Hey! What happened to your faith in me?” Steve grins.

Billy leans in and whispers, breath fanning hotly over Steve’s ear, “Prove it, then.”

The butterflies are starting to cause a cyclone now but Steve plays it cool, rolls his eyes and accepts the challenge. Leave it to Billy to turn even dinner into one. He aims at the sleeping boy’s face but just when he’s about to shoot Billy gently blows against the shell of Steve’s ear and he flinches, messes up the shot and watches the fry sail over Jason’s head.

“You bastard! That was cheating.” Steve blushes furiously and knocks their knees together in retaliation.

“Aw! Don’t take it too hard Harrington!” Billy snickers and clasps the

back of Steve's neck, kneading the muscles there in what's meant to be a comforting gesture but nearly stops Steve's heart "As long as you score when it counts..."

Billy licks his lips, locking their eyes again. His hand stays where it is and Steve can feel his thumb starting to trace circles over the fine hair on the nape of his neck. It raises goosebumps all over Steve's body and for the second time this evening, something between them shifts. Steve knows if this was a date, if they were alone, right now would be the moment they'd kiss. From the way Billy's dark lashes flutter when his gaze flicks from Steve's eyes to his mouth he can tell he's thinking the same.

He also knows that this right here is risky as fuck. But before anything else can happen, Jason is roused from his slumber when the girls in the other booth react with shrill laughter to something Kyle said. Billy quickly pulls his hand away and Steve's neck feels cold without the warmth of his palm, but his cheeks still burn.

"I'm going out for a smoke." Billy announces suddenly and gets up, patting the front of his shirt for smokes.

He slides out of the diner and into the night without another word, leaving Steve behind to watch his silhouette on the other side of the windows disappear around a corner.

Steve ponders over what to do. Rationally he knows he shouldn't follow Billy outside, that this would mean entering unknown, dangerous terrain. They're both guys after all, no matter how many times Steve thought about kissing Billy tonight. But smoking a cigarette doesn't take that long and Steve is pretty sure this is a now or never thing.

Only a minute or two pass until he gets up as well and excuses himself to the bathroom, but the other boys don't even notice him leaving, they're way too focused on their quest for female company. Steve sneaks out of the diner completely unobserved.

He finds Billy smoking in the shadow of a windowless wall facing away from the parking lot and towards the forest. The spot is hidden from sight to anyone going in or out of the building, only a white

cloud of smoke gives him away.

“Hey. Spare one for me?” Steve asks strolling up to him and casually leaning next to Billy against the concrete.

“Didn’t know you smoked, pretty boy.” Billy says around his cigarette, not at all surprised by his presence and taps another one out of his soft pack. He passes it to Steve and then gets out his Zippo to light it for him, all gentleman-like. It’s kind of cute, Steve thinks.

“Only sometimes.” he grins a bit sheepishly, feeling caught “And thanks.”

For the first few drags they just stand there smoking in peace and silence. It’s chilly outside. Even though the days are starting to get longer and warmer the nights are still cold. Steve regrets leaving his jacket in his car.

“Tonight was fun.” he says quietly after a while.

“Yeah.” Billy replies and tucks a curl behind his ear, clears his throat.

“So. We’re the new dream team now or whatever?” it’s a bit of a loaded question and Steve can hear his own insecurity sounding through but he has to ask. He has to know.

Next to him, Billy shrugs.

“Yeah. Or... you know. Whatever you want.” he sucks hard on his cigarette and the glow of the cherry illuminates his face for a moment. It’s not overly dark in that spot they’ve picked but gloomy enough to make it hard to read Billy’s expression when he’s not looking at him directly.

Steve doesn’t know what to say. Whatever you want? That’s both noncommittal and a big amount of options at the same time. He’s quite honestly a bit overwhelmed. Billy waits for a few heartbeats and then finally turns to look at Steve, giving him that cheeky signature grin with his tongue pushed between his teeth.

“Either way.” he says “I’m glad you finally came out to play. Made me wait long enough for you, King Steve.”

For someone who's that loud and boisterous, Billy can be pretty subtle with his bullshit. Now that Steve knows he's got to look out for subtext he suddenly gets it. The fact that all this time Billy didn't look for a rival in him but an equal. That he's been testing his limits to see what he was made of.

Jesus, it sure suits Hargrove and his competitive ego to be weird like that. And it also explains that half-assed apology from a few weeks ago after the incident at the Byer's house that left both of them bleeding and bruised, although Steve more so than Billy. Hargrove must have been more disappointed about Steve's total lack of interest in him than apologetic when he'd mumbled something along the lines of "Sorry 'bout your pretty face but you shouldn't have lied to me."

Next to him Billy is visibly starting to grow nervous over Steve's extended silence. He kicks at some gravel on the ground and flicks the still burning butt of his cigarette into the night before he finally blurts "You stopped talking to me now, Harrington?"

"No!" Steve cries out, too loud, startling them both. He clears his throat and repeats "No. I'm sorry, I was thinking. But I'm... I'm glad too."

"Yeah?"

"Yeah."

"So, uhm." Billy swallows thickly, wets his lips before he continues with a nervous edge to his voice "You wanna try what coach said? Working together and shit? We could, I dunno, meet up and practice a bit. I could finally teach you how to plant those damn feet of yours."

For a moment, Steve can see the future. He can see them starting to pretend they casually hang out after school just shooting some hoops or doing some laps together, talking strategy and workout routines. He can hear them call it strengthening their teamwork when in reality they're creating rituals and opportunities just to be able to touch each other. He already knows the exact pattern of the circles in which they'll dance, going round and round but never taking the final step.

It's what Billy can offer him safely without admitting too much, but it's not what Steve wants. Not after tonight. Not after that moment of clarity earlier this evening on the basketball court, that Steve only now recognizes as what it was.

He looks at Billy, finally really sees him in the washed out colors of the diner twilight, sees how that guarded expression returns to his eyes, how he tenses up and slowly draws back a little more with every second Steve hesitates. He's so close to fucking this up, just a single word away.

So Steve doesn't say anything, simply closes the distance between them with a single step and does what he wanted to do for hours. He kisses Billy.

Steve's heart is racing, when their lips meet and Billy goes stiff with a moment of surprise. It only lasts for the fraction of a second but it feels like a lifetime until sweet, sweet relief washes over him as Billy tilts his head and starts kissing back.

The sensation is a familiar and foreign at the same time because Billy's lips are soft and perfect against his own but the stubble on his chin, scratching Steve's skin is a bit of a shock, just like the pair of big, strong hands coming up to cup Steve's jaw and pull him closer. The low groan vibrating somewhere deep inside Billy's chest, his smell, a mix of Irish Spring soap, Marlboro Reds and the natural musky scent of his warm skin as well as the way he holds Steve, firm and secure, all of it is so overwhelmingly masculine, it makes Steve's knees go weak. He stumbles backwards a step and Billy follows, presses him against the wall, lines up their bodies as he deepens the kiss.

Kissing Billy is overwhelming like everything about the guy. He's a bit too greedy, too pushy trying to take control almost immediately. It turns into a fight for dominance, hard and bruising, both of them clawing at each other in between catching breaths. It's hot and heady but also a bit intimidating. Maybe because Steve is new to this, new to kissing boys, new to being on the other side of the game even though he initiated it. But Steve is all about new experiences tonight, so with a shaking breath he lets go, gives in, lets Billy take the lead in the dance of their tongues. And right on cue Billy slows down, starts

kissing him more sensually instead, more intimately, alternating between slow licks and little nips that make a small shudders run down Steve's spine.

He moans, low and sweet against Billy's mouth when the other boy shifts and presses a knee between his thighs. The friction feels divine, makes Steve ready to fall apart right now right there. Billy smells good, he tastes good, everything about this is good and messy and so addictive, he can't get enough. They don't say a word, let their bodies do the talking when they fall into a slow rhythm of moving against each other.

Billy shifts again, brings them even closer and suddenly Steve can feel his hardness digging into his hip. He lets out a shocked little gasp and immediately Billy pulls back to look at him, his pupils blown wide and his mouth bitten a beautiful red.

"Fuck, Steve! You ok? That ok?" he rasps, presses his forehead against Steve's "I'll stop. If you don't want to, I'll stop."

Steve pulls him into another kiss, desperate and needy. He's so turned on he can't think straight anymore, only feel. Feel Billy's hand on him, halfway up his shirt, feel the thickness of his jeans-clad thigh pressing so perfectly against his crotch, feel his own cock, hard and throbbing in his pants.

"Yeah, yeah I'm ok." he pants into Billy's mouth "Don't stop, Billy. Don't you dare stop now."

Steve tangles his fingers in Billy's shaggy curls and tugs at the same time as he rocks his hips up against the other boy's. Billy moans, a sound that's downright filthy and erotic and Steve surrenders completely. He wraps one leg around Billy's hip and pulls him closer between his spread thighs.

Billy's hands fall to Steve's ass and squeeze once, hard, before he lifts him abruptly, mirroring the move from earlier on the court. Steve yelps in surprise and for a second they almost lose balance before he gets his other leg and his arms around Billy and is pressed firmly against the wall again.

Like this Billy has to angle up his face when he looks at Steve, smiling and panting. There's a slight sheen of sweat on his upper lip and his forehead and his signature curl sticks to his face but his eyes are so bright they set Steve on fucking fire.

"Fuck, you're strong." Steve sighs, sounding like some lovestruck chick but in his defense Billy's strength is absolutely and unfairly hot.

"And you're the prettiest thing I've ever seen, Harrington. God, why'd you have to play so hard to get?" Billy rolls his hips eliciting another moan from Steve.

"Thought you liked a challenge?" Steve sounds breathless, there's liquid, golden heat starting to pool in his belly and he knows he's close, so close.

"Like winning more." Billy grunts and catches Steve in another wet kiss.

That's all it takes to push Steve over the edge. He comes hard, breaking the kiss when he arches his back and shakes through his orgasm. There are spots filling his vision as he feels the warmth of his cum filling his briefs, running over his skin and staining the inside of his pants.

Billy follows close and for a moment they share the shocks running through their bodies as Billy hold Steve tight with almost bruising force. It takes a few seconds and hard breaths until they come down, until Billy let's Steve down again to stand on legs that feel like jelly.

When the endorphin high ebbs away and Steve's brain starts working again, he finds himself draped against Billy, gone completely soft in his arms. He cards his hand slowly through the other boy's messy hair while Billy nibbles gently on the nape of his neck.

Billy's wearing that red pearl snap shirt again, which sticks now soaked with sweat to his back. It tickles an absurd memory and suddenly, Steve has to laugh.

"What's so funny?" Billy asks, sounding soft and groggy.

Steve can't stop giggling, he buries his face in the crook of Billy's

neck and snorts “Don’t cream your pants.”

Now Billy laughs as well and playfully catches Steve’s earlobe with his teeth.

“Too late.” he purrs “And who’s fault is that?”

“Sorry, not sorry.”

Steve turns his head to kiss Billy again but before their mouths can meet they’re suddenly interrupted.

“HARGROVE? HARRINGTON?!” Danny can be heard shouting into the night and a bit quieter, like he’s speaking to another person he adds “Shit, did they bail on us and leave us with the check?”

“Their cars are still there.” Kyle’s voice sounds muffled, farther away.

“Fuck...” Billy closes his eyes, leans his head against Steve’s and inhales deeply, then he says resignedly “I’ll go. I’ll go in a second. Wait for a bit before you follow me. Just tell them you took a dump or something.”

Steve snorts. “You’re a real charming fella, you know that Hargrove?”

“Sure do.” He winks and makes to step away but Steve holds him back.

“You wanna meet Monday after school?” the words come out in a rush and Steve feels his pulse in his throat “For practice?”

“Practice?” Billy’s face visibly falls.

“Basketball, remember? You said you’d teach me how to plant my feet.” he bites his lip, feels the heat of the blush returning to his face when he adds, whispering “And maybe for some more of this?”

Billy grins, triumphant, and kisses him again, quick and hard.

“Monday.” he says with a wink and jogs around the corner.

“There you are, Hargrove! What the fuck were you doing out here

this whole time? We thought you left.” Steve hears Danny complain.

“Sorry, I was jerking off.” Billy deadpans and Steve has to cover his mouth with both hands in order not to laugh out loud.

“Gross.” is the last word he hears before the diner door closes behind the other boys.

They win that season. Next to the yearbook picture of the team receiving their trophy is one of Steve and Billy with their arms around each other’s shoulder and big smiles. The caption reads “Hawkins Tigers’ ‘Dream Team’ Hargrove and Harrington”.

Years later, the big fat heart drawn with red marker around that photo in Steve’s yearbook still reminds him of all the hours of hard training they’ve put into earning that title, as well as all the other secret memories they made together back then.

He likes to pick it up sometimes and revel in sweet nostalgia, likes to remind himself how lucky he was to see something in Billy’s eyes he never thought to find there that evening. And even now that they’re far away from Hawkins, that they share one home and one life, they’re still there whenever Billy looks at Steve. The stars in his eyes, that light up Steve’s world.

Author's Note:

I know I have other fics to work on and I literally have nothing to say in my defense except that I had a rough week and felt the urge to indulge myself a little. The result was this happy, sappy ficlet written for no other purpose than to make myself and maybe you as well, dear reader, feel better.

I hope you enjoyed it! If you did, a kudos or a comment would make me so happy. ;)

You can find me on [tumblr](#) , if you’d like for fics,

general 80s aesthetics and occasional art. ^^